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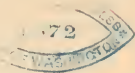
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*Deposited Aug. 19.*  
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OUR POLITICAL PRACTICE.

73.

THE  
USURPATIONS OF VICE  
THROUGH THE  
POPULAR NEGLIGENCE.  
BY MOUNTAINEER.



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There is no society without jacobins ; no free society without a formidable host of them ; and no democracy whose powers they will not usurp ; —

To lessen the hopes of usurping demagogues, we must enlighten, animate, and combine the spirit of freemen ; —

FISHER AMES.

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IN THREE PARTS.

PART FIRST.

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1864.

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TO MY FELLOW CITIZENS.

It appears to me that our Government is in the way of ruin ; not from the war merely—for that we could manage if we were more virtuous—but from our rottenness in the Representative relation. Our rule is, mainly, one of self, under mere spoilsmen. A republic cannot prosper under such a practice. Our downfall would be inevitable, even if there were no war. It would come in time. But war affords opportunity in vice and hastens the catastrophe.

And our recourse, it seems to me, is in the vigilance of the people, under our general morality and intelligence. Our special vice is negligence. We have become careless of our personal efforts, and are apt to think that, somehow, affairs will mend without *our* aid. As we abandon vigilance, we abandon morality and intelligence. We fail to apply them, and hence we cannot prosper.

I intend to offer, herewith, brief items of testimony on our political debasement ; and, in presenting the state of things as it appears to me, I shall venture to urge means of safety under an aroused vigilance.

This matter claims a higher view than a party view. It demands unbiased action in the light of truth for the common good. We have a great trust. We have an inheritance to conserve, not only for our own children, but for the race as well, and, moreover, for the glory of the Supreme Being.

With these views, I feel that my aim is a just one ; and if I should fail to impress others, I shall cherish no disappointment, but shall rest in the satisfaction of an honest effort.

C. W.

June, 1864.

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four,

BY CHARLES WRIGHT,

In the District Court of the United States, for the District of Massachusetts.

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# OUR POLITICAL PRACTICE.

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## PART FIRST.

### A GENERAL VIEW OF THE CAUSE.

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This is not the cause of faction, or of party, or of any individual, but the common interest of every man in Britain. — *Junius*.

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The authorities of Government, some months ago, held in durance an alleged rogue, whom they had seized as a public plunderer. They were seeking to accomplish his proper punishment, when it was announced to the American public that a distinguished senator from the New England states was involved in the case as the paid attorney of the culprit; — paid, it was said, in a sum of thousands, to procure his deliverance from impending penalties. The name of the senator was not long withheld. It was John P. Hale. He owned the impeachment in the boldest openness.

He alleged of himself an unconsciousness of wrong in a plea of sweet and placid innocence. He was a lawyer — he! — and therefore he did it! Not as a senator; not as a patriot; nor yet as a man of honor. O no! Not either. Are not these characters for occasions of convenience, which are by no means to interfere with the achievements of self, when self, in the eyes of the public functionary, may assume the predominant place? Moreover, *a man may be separated from his acts*: So this senator informed us some years ago. And *he*, ostensibly a high-toned statesman, in the exigences of self, may be merged, if need be, in *him*, the paid and influential attorney! He may ignore the senator, abandon the patriot, forego the commonest dictates of

honor; and, accepting the profits of imputed villany, he may thwart the processes of public justice in the relations of a service he is sworn to support. These acts are the lawyer's, not Mr. Hale's. They are *detached* from him. Hence he is untouched, in high immunity, a senator still, the honorable John P. Hale.

Mistaken republican system and practice, when the members of government, in one of its departments, may, in the mere acquisition of money, direct their powers to the defeat of proceedings instituted in a coördinate department of government, to secure the enforcement of public justice; proceedings, moreover, for the prevention of crime in the relations of an abounding public infamy—in the relations of plunder and spoils. Oblivious, innocent Hale! \*

Alas our statesmen! Unfortunate land! And yet, the people have no right to complain.

We have surrendered politics to mere politicians, of whom Mr. Hale is one. And since he is better than most of the class, he should be left in his place, if it please the politicians, till the people resume their political affairs, and select men to administer government with a uniform reference to ability and worth,—with a positive reference to the public good. Then our

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\* Judge Advocate General Holt is writing a review of the trial of Capt. James M. Hunt, Senator Hale's client, in which he will take the ground that the fine of two thousand dollars imposed was an insufficient punishment. The commission, in its sentence, stated that it was thus "lenient in consideration of the imprisonment and the pecuniary losses already suffered by the said Hunt, by reason of his arrest." It was proved that Hunt made several hundred thousand dollars without investing a copper, and his losses were the fees he paid the senator, while the imprisonment was too brief to do good or hurt. The judge advocate will make out his case.—*Springfield Republican*, March 12, '64.

The following is the concluding paragraph of a fair and discriminating discussion of this important subject by the *Journal of Commerce*:

"We have no hesitation in expressing our opinion on the acts of individuals which become public property, as in the case of Mr. Hale. We do not think he meant to be dishonest or dishonorable in accepting a fee for his services, because we believe his perceptions were befogged by the atmosphere of fraud, corruption and crime, surrounding him in the party to which he is attached. But we do believe that, if he had carefully considered the question, he would have found that he was paid as a Senator and not as a lawyer. He has been demoralized by bad company."—*Boston Weekly Courier*, Jan. 7, '64.

officials will serve the people. Now they serve themselves. And they elect themselves for that one aim. Is our country indeed "The Paradise of demagogues"?

What is the recognized Republican theory? It is the rule of the people, through their own representatives.

The rule of the people involves action. It involves the election, from among themselves, of men who are patriots, not self-seekers; men who are eminent for ability and worth. Their proper rule involves no less. These general statements none will deny.

Nor will any one deny that if the people fail in the essential requirements of the republican being, they will fail to realize a suitable government. The republican form will become perverted. The prerogatives of the people, the public emoluments, the rewards and honors of official position, will revert to mere political seekers, to selfish demagogues, corrupt politicians, who, in the rule of self, will bring on ruin, unless the people arouse in time, and resume their political duty. And the maladministrations already realized should amply suffice to awaken alarm. They should arouse the people to reform.\*

\* It were well, no doubt, to present a few paragraphs from the public prints, as significant of the state of things in public relations.

In an article on the practices in vogue at Washington, the *New York Journal of Commerce* draws the following frightful picture:

"The period in which we just now live is one of unbounded fraud and corruption. There was never an administration in Washington under which fraud was carried on as openly and boldly as now. The millions that are the plunder of the present army of hangers-on will never be counted. There is no end to the terrible revelations. Nor does the trouble stop with the mere robbing of the public purse. The most atrocious crimes are perpetrated with the stolen money, and the people are growing used to the recitals. Legislators are bought and sold in Pennsylvania, New York, and elsewhere. Elections are fraudulently carried. The machinery of political parties is turned everywhere to the private account of individual office-seekers or money-seekers. The taint is spreading through the entire body politic. Men look calmly now on crimes from which they would have shrunk two or three years ago. Men think on the whole that it is a good thing when the Administration carry an election by shipping home a few thousand selected voters. Men chuckle over some political ruse in which a Legislature is bought for money. Men approve the action of the Treasury Department in giving a responsible office to a man whose vote, conscience, and reputation, as every one knows, were sold by himself and bought by the party which protects him. No one seems to think that fraud, public robbery, is a very great crime. We meet daily in the streets, nightly at receptions and grand

These maladministrations are by no means local. Official corruption is general. It is not a matter of a particular party.

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assemblies, men who are known to be fattening on plunder, but whose social position seems wholly unaffected by the fact. We are not drawing any too dark a picture of the moral condition of affairs under the present Administration. The doctrine is in principle everywhere acted on, that if a man professes to be right on the negro question, he may be as black a sinner on all other questions as he pleases, and not lose the social and public support of his party or his daily associates in life."—*Boston Weekly Courier*, Jan. 7, 1863.

There have been mistakes. There have been speculations. Weak men have disgraced, and bad men have betrayed the Government. *Contractors have fattened on fat jobs. Adventurers have found the war a source of private gain. Moral desperadoes have flocked about the National Capital and lain in wait for prey. The scum of the land has gathered about the sources of power and defiled them by its reek and offensive odor.* There has been mismanagement in the departments; mismanagement wherever great labor has been performed and great responsibilities devolving. Men—even Presidents and Cabinet officers and Commanding Generals have erred because they could not grasp the full significance of the drama, and because they were compelled to strike out on untrodden paths.—*Albany Atlas and Argus*, Oct. 30, 1862, from *Eve Journal*.

The *Chicago Tribune* is one of the most ultra of the papers of the Republican stamp. Here is what its Washington correspondent writes to it of the state of affairs at the Capital :

"The tone of morality here is considerably lower than it ever has been before. This is admitted on all hands, and can be proved, or, rather, needs no proof, for the air is heavy with public and private guilt. A few years ago a high Austrian official, whose peculations were discovered, applied the lancet to his own veins, and another similarly situated hanged himself. There is no such sense of shame here. Any coroner's jury in Washington would find a verdict of insanity for such conduct, and the verdict would be accepted in good faith. The Southerners, as a class, had a very nice sense of honor so far as the public treasury was concerned. Floyd was an exception—almost a solitary exception—to the rule. When they held the power here there was comparatively little thieving, and, when any was discovered, it was promptly exposed and denounced. There has been a change—a dreadful change for the worse.

The frauds and attempted frauds in the treasury, in one channel and another, come so fast and from such unexpected quarters, that one is bewildered in contemplating them. Yet nobody has been brought to justice, and nobody seems to think it possible that anybody should be brought to justice. 'Oh, those rascally contractors!' says some honest man in the rural districts. For every dollar wrongfully taken by a contractor, five have been taken by public servants." *Albany Atlas and Argus*, Oct. 30, 1862.

The small tax imposed on Distilled Liquors already manufactured is remitted by the Senate bill. We expected it. When the proposition that Whiskey on hand should be taxed was before Congress last winter, a mercantile house in our city that held a large stock of the article was told : "You must sell to certain parties operating in Washington eight thousand barrels at eighty cents per gallon, or the tax will go on." They consented, and that same Whiskey was sold, after the tax had been defeated, at an advance of thirty cents per gallon, without having been removed. Here was not less than \$72,000 paid to defeat the Whiskey tax by one house ; judge, then, what must have been paid in all. Of course, the House tax on Whiskey in store will be stricken out ; we have no hope of any other result.—*N. Y. Tribune*, May 21, 1864.

*Debate in the Senate : —*

On motion of Mr. GRIMES, (Un., Iowa) his bill in relation to Naval supplies was taken up, and he addressed the Senate for over two hours in answer to the adverse report made thereon by the Naval Committee. He gave a history of the



It belongs to all the political hosts; and is revealed, more or less, in official position, irrespective of party, or section, or

manner of obtaining naval supplies since the organization of the navy, to show that, under navy agents, who originally were not legally authorized officers, a system had grown up by collusion with contractors and master-workmen, and that the system proposed by his bill would remedy these abuses. He defended the Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks for his efforts in detecting the defects of the old system. He held that the subordinates were in fault. He analyzed certain contracts heretofore made, under bids for supplies, showing as examples, instances where Scotch iron had been bid for at one dollar per ton, and American iron at twenty and thirty-six dollars per ton, and of the large amount advertised of the former only nine or ten tons were delivered; while of the latter, double or treble the amount would be furnished. The contractors, knowing by collusion beforehand what amount would be required, were thus enabled to secure the contract against honest men, by reason of their aggregate bid under the contract system being less. He contended that these things showed collusion between contractors and the employees of the Government. He mentioned among these contractors, Smith Brothers & Co., of Boston, who had, since 1861, furnished to the amount of \$1,010,900; Schofield & Co., of New York, to about a similar sum; and another firm in New Hampshire, to the amount of \$1,382,652; also, Joseph L. Savage, of Washington; items in the latter's bill to the Navy Yard amounting in the aggregate to \$4,687, he being the lowest bidder of those whom Mr. Grimes presumed to be merely his confederates. The prices of the articles actually furnished were double their market value; as, for instance, axes at \$1 50, the market price of which was 75c., and many other articles in proportion. Mr. Grimes showed also from their books that Schofield & Co., now under court-martial, in September last, had furnished brass screws costing \$1,400, at \$6,780, and forty-eight sheets of copper, costing \$123, at \$4,033 50; leather costing \$1,866 at \$6,043, &c., &c. Mr. Grimes explained at length the necessity of his bill to remedy these defects. He said it would provide that these matters of supply would be confined to regular officers of the Navy instead of temporary political appointees, and prescribed such severe punishment and penalties as would diminish to a larger extent the corruptions and frauds which were now practised.

Mr. Hale remarked \* \* \* that he had been arraigned for his denunciation of fraud, and corruption, and profligacy, as opposed to this Administration. His support of the Administration could not be appreciated by the thieves and plunderers that clung around it. They would only appreciate the Administration as long as they could rob it.

Mr. Davis said \* \* \* From the gentleman's conclusions there never was a more corrupt Government on earth.—*N. Y. Tribune*, May 24, 1864.

The war affords *opportunity* merely, — opportunity of spoils and plunder. The following paragraph is highly illustrative of the abounding means of villainy. Will any of the "candidates" be properly punished? Doubtful.

'It is stated,' says the *Intelligencer*, 'that the investigations growing out of the frauds in the quartermaster's department at Alexandria are still progressing, and new candidates for the Old Capitol present themselves daily. Nearly all of the contractors, together with the quartermasters and their clerks are now in that institution. The Secretary of War expects to have the entire party before the investigation closes.' The *Union* says:

'The frauds, it is believed, are far more extensive than was at first supposed. From the fact that the officer whose duty it was to purchase forage for the army had appointed his brother inspector of hay, and a son of the principal contractor inspector of grain, there is every reason to believe that no

State. Any party whatever that secures an ascendancy remains still in the lead of politicians. Hence to change is not to reform. A change is merely a change of politicians. It but serves to elevate a new set of men, who have self to serve as their predecessors had; who have family friends, and political friends, and the friends of friends, all of whom, by the rule of "spoils" that has governed in the last thirty years, may be fitly attached to the public crib.\* Since the administration of the second Adams,

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means have been neglected whereby money could be made at the expense of the Government."—*Boston Weekly Courier*, Jan. 7, '64.

The opportunity of the war, without any doubt, would be as readily seized by democratic officials were they in the position of rule. The republicans are not *especially* wrong. *The evil is general*. Does any one suppose the democratic politicians are of a type more honest or pure? Let him look at those of New York City, and contemplate their administration of affairs. Let him examine the practices of James Buchanan, and his immediate aids and dependents. Indeed, our corruptions originated largely in the theory and practice of "spoils," which, some thirty years ago were openly promulgated from the hall of the Senate, by the ruling democracy of the nation.

John C. Calhoun was right in saying that the Democratic party was held together by the "cohesive power of the public plunder."—*N. Y. Herald*, June 14, 1864.

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\* If any one were to say that our national troubles are mainly due to the introduction, thirty years ago, of the maxim, that "to the victors belong the spoils," it might be a hard matter to answer the arguments that he could bring. A great number of lucrative offices have been made vacant by each election, and filled by the successful party. The interest thus formed has grown to immense proportions. Personal influence over elections has diminished. Weight and worth of individual character has become of less consequence. Principles of public policy have been dropping to a secondary place. The main thing has been that the election might by some means be carried, and the emoluments of place be secured. And as money was to be made, money was the more freely spent; until the business began to look in some quarters like a great gambling operation. It is doubtful whether slavery alone would have brought us into these straits, if the possession of the offices in the gift of the federal government had not been a matter of so great pecuniary importance. Much of northern subserviency to the slave interest came of that. And besides this, the whole business of politics took on a look, so mercenary and mean and selfish, that honorable men who ought to have entered into it and controlled it, turned away in disgust.—*Springfield Republican*, March 28, '63.

The system of "spoils" has become universal in the relations of party and government. The two leading parties are equally corrupt, and the people of each who are not politicians, must begin the reform *at home*. Party is inevitable in the republican form. Fisher Ames asks: "Is it in the nature of free

no party in power, no set of politicians, has sought to curtail official patronage or stanch the supplies of public plunder.\*

Nor is reform to be found in simply a change among the politicians of a party incumbent. We are assured there is in the New York Custom House an abounding mass of practical knavery — enough to confound the nation.† And has it not

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governments to exist without parties?" And he answers: "Such a thing has never yet been, and probably never will be." And De Tocqueville says: "Parties are a necessary evil in free governments, but they have not at all times the same character and the same propensities." \* \* \* "America has had great parties, but has them no longer." Corrupt politicians secure their ends by inflaming party rage and warfare. Each party, then, must reform itself through the action of its honest men. Each must oust its corrupt politicians. No majority party, with its best men at the lead, will ever ruin the country.

If we fail to put down this rebellion it will be because political prejudices and the lust for place and power, and the spoils of office, override the patriotism of the people.—*Boston Journal*, Jan. 24, '63.

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\* Now, though such leaders may have many occasions of jealousy and discord with one another, especially in the division of power and booty, is it not absurd to suppose that any set of them will endeavour to restore both to the right owners?—*Fisher Ames' Political Essays*.

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† The *Delaware Gazette* (Wilmington) says:

Our readers have already been acquainted with the exposure of immense frauds in the New York Custom House, through the instrumentality of the Congressional Investigating Committee, of which Col. Van Wyck is chairman. An effort was made to prevent the evidence from becoming public, but the Colonel was not to be deterred by threats or bribes, and insisted that his report should be printed. The following extract from his speech in Congress on the subject, expresses sentiments that must meet with a fervent response in the breast of every real patriot. It should be recollected that Col. Van Wyck is a Republican, and his testimony is the more valuable on that account:

"The neck begins to chafe where the yoke of this heavy burden is borne. The Administration has feared to drive such men from its door, lest hostility should be aroused against it. That which they supposed strength has been the great source of weakness. With a single exception, when has one of these men been court-martialed or punished? To-day they have injured the republic more than the South in arms. Had they been arrested and placed under the gallows or in Fort Lafayette, *your army would have been stronger, your people at home more united. No wonder that your soldiers and friends are dissatisfied. They cannot appreciate the patriotism of stealing.* Your army, for a mere pittance, is deprived of all the luxuries, and, at the same time, the necessities of life; enduring all the privations of camp and the dangers of battle, while they see base men making mockery of the misfortune of the nation, coining gold from the sighs and tears of the people."—*Boston Weekly Courier*, March 2, 1863.

been thus for many a year, a thing of progression, constant, regular, sure? — wholly unchecked by a change of incumbents? Unchecked, no doubt, from the manifest fact that whoever is placed in a public position, made vacant by a knave displaced, is himself a seeker of the prescriptive class, — an eligible self-pushing political seeker, — who has already earned a right to preferment, and who therefore receives the reward. Who ever heard of inquiry abroad, — of a government agent in pursuit of fitness for positions of trust? — in pursuit of integrity allied to ability? What sections of country were ever explored for thoroughly suitable men? what counties canvassed? what villages searched? The New York merchants find suitable clerks; and suitable men are in every position involving rule and trust, outside of the government service.\* That service,

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Report of Mr. Jordan, Solicitor of the Treasury Department. He says generally :

“As to the accessibility of many of those employed in the Custom House to corrupt influence, the evidence is, I regret to say, conclusive and startling. The facts developed show that money, in large sums, was received by officials as the undisguised reward of fraudulent acts of connivance. But, in addition to this, the statements submitted seem to justify the belief that nearly the entire body of subordinate officers in and about the Custom House are, in one way or another, in the habitual receipt of emoluments from importers or their agents. One lawyer declares that he has paid to a single record clerk the sum of \$1800 within a period of fifteen months. Entries from the books of an importing house doing but a moderate business are discovered, showing that about a thousand dollars had been paid by it to an examiner within a period of a year. Van Vechten (one of the officers of the Custom House) admits that he received not less than \$2500 per annum from such sources. It is shown that a bond clerk, with a salary of \$1000 per annum, enters upon a term of eight years with nothing, and leaves it with a fortune of \$30,000. A majority of the officials questioned on the subject admit that they receive such emoluments to a greater or less amount.” — *Springfield Republican*, Feb. 17, '63.

It is likely to be proved that officials of the Custom House have accepted bribes for affording means in supplying the rebel enemy.

Investigations into New York Custom House affairs, by the Committee of the House, develop the fact that a trade of such magnitude has been conducted between parties in the North and the rebels on the Rio Grande, that the rebel agent at Matamoras has pocketed out of it over a million dollars as his share of the profits. Who the guilty parties in the Custom House are, of course is not known, publicly at least, but the arrest of an employè, on Saturday last, directly by the Committee, it is strongly believed, will lead to further arrests. — *Springfield Weekly Republican*, April 2, '64.

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\* The utter incompetency of many of the clerks in the Executive Departments is getting to be a subject of universal comment. In one of the bureaux of the

alas! the politicians hold. That service they hold through a popular negligence. The people fail. Hence our peril.

And however much the people are assured, by preliminary pledges of reform, still, led on as we are by self-seeking men, no party seeks the public good, except as a subordinate aim. The first good is the good of self, on the part of the men who lead. The second good is the good of party, which, indeed, is the means of self.\* The third, perchance, is the public good, which is never justly achieved. And our evils breed their own immensity. The plunder of government is the stimulant of party, the support of politicians, their hope, their strength, their stay. And the host multiplies; — greedy, ravenous, ruthless. And the people rest. The public concerns they regard as remote. They pursue their farms, they pursue trade; while the far-off interests of public affairs remain in the hands of demagogues.† Can the republic stand? How long will

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Treasury Department, for example, the second man in command is said to be incapable of writing correctly even the most ordinary letter, and a clerk under him cannot write at all. In one place mere boys are intrusted with highly responsible duties, while men who have grown gray in the service have to devote their time to copying. The extent to which this style of incompetent engineering is carried, is really astounding. It was with an eye to reform in these matters, that Mr. Boutwell introduced a bill for creating a Board of Examination, whose duty it should be to examine all clerks appointed to office, as well as those now in office who are unfit for their positions.—*Boston Weekly Courier*, April 7, '64.

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\* In the progress of our confusion, these men will effectually assert their claims and display their skill. There is no governing power in the State but party. The moderate and thinking part of the citizens are without power or influence; and it must be so, because all power and influence are engrossed by a factious combination of men, who can overwhelm uncombined individuals with numbers, and the wise and virtuous with clamor and fury.—*Fisher Ames' Political Essays*.

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† Who will be the associates? Certainly not the virtuous, who do not wish to control the Society, but quietly to enjoy its protection. The enterprising merchant, the thriving tradesman, the careful farmer, will be engrossed by the toils of their business, and will have little time or inclination for the unprofitable and disquieting pursuits of politics. It is not the industrious, sober husbandman who will plough that barren field; it is the lazy and dissolute bankrupt, who has no other to plough. The idle, the ambitious, and the needy will band together to break the hold the law has upon them, and then to get hold of law. *Fisher Ames' Political Essays*.

it last? Are the developments of vice regarded as perilous? If they are so regarded, who, pray, is alarmed? What measures of reform are already instituted? — how many? Not one!

No doubt there are those whose sentiment is that the sway of demagogues in the affairs of a republic is the natural evil of the republican form; that, indeed, their rule is inevitable; and that, therefore, it is vain to anticipate a change which shall effectually ameliorate the condition of things in the relations of politics and government; that, in short, we are doomed to an ephemeral being. It is not to be denied that in enlightened

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Man is a docile animal. If he wasn't, the professed politicians wouldn't have things their own way so often as they do. They get together and go through the farce of a nominating convention, putting up the men for office whom they think will best serve their own purposes in the future, and the people quietly ratify the nomination at the polls, no matter whether they approve the nomination or not. In fact very few of those who go to nominating conventions have any hand in the selection of a candidate. It is a pleasant thought to them to imagine they do, but they are deluded. The thing was probably decided, if not from the foundation of the world, at any rate from the time there was any prospect of an office becoming vacant. It is all very pretty to talk about a popular government, but the people have really very little hand in the matter, the politicians do it all, and have things their own way.—*Springfield Republican*, Oct. 23, 1863.

MR. CHASE'S DECLINATION. \* \* \* \* We believe his example ought to be immediately imitated by half a dozen other gentlemen who are now prominently named for the next presidency — whose friends are engaged night and day, to our personal knowledge, establishing parties, cliques, committees, newspapers, and other agencies, all having in view a victorious capture of the Baltimore Convention. If we were to uncover what we know of these secret and manifold machinations — and perhaps we will at a convenient season, speaking impartially and sparing no man — our simple-minded readers would open their eyes in wonder. At this moment, letters and telegrams, innumerable, are flying over city and country, all converging upon the presidential nomination of several gentlemen who are now struggling to outwit each other next June.

In this country Presidents are *elected* by the People; but they have heretofore been *nominated* by Politicians. Now, for a novelty, let us have both nomination and election by the People. We would like to see the next nominating convention composed of plain men, not politicians, not wire-workers, not party engineers. It would produce a salutary change in our politics if, hereafter, no man who is an office-holder should be eligible to a seat in a presidential convention. At present, men in official positions are either saving or losing their heads, according as they stand affected to this or that prospective candidate; bargains are being made; threats used; screws brought to pinch; pressure of all kinds applied; and all apparently without a thought that the men who do these things are dishonoring themselves. We are not speaking of the Democratic party — of whose interior we know little; but of the Republican party — whereof we know more than goes to form a flattering opinion.—*Independent*, March 17, 1864.



Europe such an opinion prevails. It cannot, then, be regarded as strange that, to some extent, it should obtain with us.\*

\* Mr. Riggs says the paper currency scheme will produce money, and make every man richer. He is a banker, and ought to know; but to my ignorant eye it seems likely to prove most destructive; and I confess that, whatever be the result of this war, I have no desire for the ruin of so many happy communities as have sprung up in the United States. Had it been possible for human beings to employ popular institutions without intrigue and miserable self-seeking, and to be superior to faction and party passion, the condition of parts of the United States must cause regret that an exemption from the usual laws which regulate human nature was not made in America; but the strength of the United States — directed by violent passions, by party interests, and by selfish intrigues — was becoming dangerous to the peace of other nations, and therefore there is an utter want of sympathy with them in their time of trouble. — *My Diary North and South*, by W. H. Russell.

Paid a visit to Colonel Seaton of the *National Intelligencer*, a man deservedly respected and esteemed for his private character, which has given its impress to the journal he has so long conducted. \* \* \* \* \* In the minds of all the very old men in the States, there is a feeling of great sadness and despondency respecting the present troubles; and, though they cling to the idea of a restoration of the glorious Union of their youth, it is hoping against hope. 'Our game is played out. It was the most wonderful and magnificent career of success the world ever saw, but rogues and gamblers took up the cards at last: they quarrelled, and are found out.' — *Same*.

But in democratic states there will be factions. The sovereign power, being nominally in the hands of all, will be effectively within the grasp of a few; and, therefore, by the very laws of our nature, a few will combine, intrigue, lie, and fight to engross it to themselves. All history bears testimony that this attempt has never yet been disappointed.

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We are to be subject, then, to a despotic faction, irritated by the resistance that has delayed, and the scorn that pursues their triumph, elate with the insolence of an arbitrary and uncontrollable domination, and who will exercise their sway, not according to the rules of integrity or national policy, but in conformity with their own exclusive interests and passions.

This is a state of things which admits of progress, but not of reformation; it is the beginning of a revolution, which must advance. Our affairs, as first observed, no longer depend on counsel. The opinion of a majority is no longer invited or permitted to control our destinies, or even to retard their consummation. The men in power may, and no doubt will, give place to some other faction, who will succeed, because they are abler men, or, possibly, in candor we say it, because they are worse. Intrigue will for some time answer instead of force, or the mob will supply it. But by degrees force only will be relied on by those who are *in*, and employed by those who are *out*. The *vis major* will prevail, and some bold chieftain will conquer Liberty, and triumph and reign in her name.

Yet it is confessed, we have hopes that this event is not very near. — *Fisher Ames' Political Essays*.

If men are capable of governing themselves by reason, why have all democratic and republican governments come to ruin? Why have they not been permanent? Corruption, it will be said, has ruined them. True; and this is conceding the whole question. It is the depravity of man which has ruined all former free governments, and *which will ruin ours*. \* \* \* \* \* Must we, then, despair of the Republic? No, Sir, not yet. The people of this country are republican in principle, and will not abandon the hope that a repub-

Let us look at this sentiment. It is not unimportant in its general influence; for, if our ruin remains but a matter of time; if our future is hopeless in the political relation, then our efforts for reform are vain; or, at best, can only delay our doom. We cannot deny that if an evil rules, and rules, moreover, in an increasing strength, in the relations of a government for the public good, the evil must, in the course of time, defeat that government's aim. But does the evil of the republic necessarily rule? Is the sway of demagogues inevitable?

The demagogue, it is clear, has no proper power. He is a mere usurper. His achievements of place are through the popular ignorance, or popular negligence. The *popular vices* are his manifest means; and by a virtuous people who are properly vigilant, he may be readily deposed and precluded position.

It were well nigh superfluous to repeat a truth universally recognized among thinking men who sustain the republican theory — that the life of the system is only found in the intelligence and morality of the popular mass.\* It has external

lean government can be sustained. But Sir, that hope *must* be abandoned, unless the great men of our country will lay aside their party strife, and unite in some vigorous efforts to amend the defects of our Constitution. The leading men, Sir, must \* \* \* \* mount up to the source of our public evils. — *Marcellus*, by Noah Webster.

\* Republics, according to Montesquieu and De Tocqueville, are founded on two great principles — public virtue and the intelligence of the people, including eternal vigilance. When one or the other of these foundation stakes is removed the structure must fall. Let us not, therefore, imagine that God will work miracles in our case. Heaven helps those who help themselves. If we are not fit to govern ourselves events will soon put a despot over us who will rule us with a rod of iron. Americans are no exception to human nature. We are of the same flesh and blood as the men who have gone before us for thousands of years, and the same fate happens to all. Human government seems to be moving round in a circle. First kings, then republics, then despots, and so on to the last syllable of recorded time. The American government is only a modification of the governments which have preceded it. It is a representative confederation of representative republics banded together by a constitution in an indissoluble Union. But its founders said it was only an "experiment," and its permanence depended on the moderation and wisdom of the people in all sections of the country. — *New York Herald*, April 14, 1863.

Well, therefore, and in the highest spirit of philosophy, did Montesquieu say that the Roman Republic was overthrown, not, as is commonly supposed, by



perils, no doubt. An external physical force may destroy it,—it may be overborne by the arms of a foreign power. But from internal causes it can never decay among a people of ample intelligence and worth. The important question, then, manifestly is, Have we the intelligence and the moral worth that will suffice to maintain the system? It is not my purpose to attempt herein the full consideration of the question. I, however, conceive it may be well maintained, that with us, at least with some of our states, the republican form will endure. That the elements of failure, whatever they are, will be recognized before our ruin is sure, and the competent remedy applied.

the ambition of Cæsar and Pompey, but by that state of things which made the success of their ambition possible. — *Buckle's Essays*. — *Mill on Liberty*.

For Liberty is the one thing most essential to the right development of individuals and to the real grandeur of nations. It is a product of knowledge, when knowledge advances in a healthy and regular manner. — *Same*.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports \* \* \*. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity \* \* \*. And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it should be enlightened. — *Washington's Valedictory Address to the people of the United States*.

They (the French revolutionists) have attacked the foundation of civil society, by endeavoring to root out from the human heart, all belief in revelation, and in the moral government of a Supreme Being. — *Rights of Neutrals, by Noah Webster*.

Although a democratic government is founded upon a very simple and natural principle, it always presupposes the existence of a high degree of culture and enlightenment in society. At first, it might be supposed to belong to the earliest ages of the world; but maturer observation will convince us that it could only come last in the succession of human history. — "*Democracy in America*," by De Tocqueville.

It cannot be doubted that, in the United States, the instruction of the people powerfully contributes to the support of the democratic republic; and such must always be the case, I believe, where the instruction which enlightens the understanding is not separated from the moral education which amends the heart. — *Same*.

That though the interests of the present national Union may prove too remote for individual concern, in our present state of enlightenment, and that hence it may fail through the popular negligence — the people leaving it a prey to demagogues — we shall not abandon the republican system. That by means of reform we shall still retain it in separate states, or in minor unions, if not in the extended form of the present. That popular effort will supersede negligence. That we shall finally manifest intelligence, morality, and a popular vigilance, sufficient at least, for means of relief in time to avert a general ruin.

The condition, then, of republican practice, in the general proficiencies of mind and morals that we as a people have secured, is not a condition of permanent excellence. Of a steady success it presents no assurance; it affords no immediate hope. It presents both the fact and the prospect of change. We are to experience relapses in the public weal, from the dominant rule of inherent vices, which, for the time, secure a dominion through the general immorality, the general ignorance, or the habitual or casual negligence of the people. We have now to do with the *popular negligence*. This I conceive to be the dominant vice that has induced the imminent peril of the times. And herein we need a reform. Our honor demands it, our just prosperity, indeed, our republican being.

Our imminent peril is found, I believe, primarily, in the *popular negligence* — more immediately, in a *lack of political integrity*. A lack of integrity manifestly appears in all the relations of government; and an upright government is utterly impossible, through the agencies of corrupt politicians. *Corrupt politicians secure the ascendancy through the general neglect of the people*. Usurping demagogues appear in government. They elect themselves. The machinery of party is theirs. They hold the conventions. *Not one in scores of the mass of the people bestows any effort in the primary means that elevate men and form the government*. Our elections are *not* — who does not know it?

— our elections are not on the *days* of election; nor are they accomplished by the *legal ballot*. They are secured at the caucuses; they are made at the conventions; where mere politicians interchange strength, and cordially support one-another. The people, at the ballot box, ratify their acts, affording the requirements of law. Our government, then, is really the government of adroit self-seekers, political adepts, who have self to serve, not the people: who find opportunity in the popular indolence, indifference, negligence. *Vice usurps the place of virtue through the popular failure in vigilance.\**

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\* The apathy of all, or at least of most well-to-do persons, in the affairs of the country, is something amazing, appalling. Your rich merchant and banker is here altogether absorbed by his anxiety for making money, or all agog with the pleasure of spending it. He is either nailed to his desk at his counting-house, or heaping luxuries in his country-house, or displaying his wealth at the watering-places. Politics is the business of politicians — i. e., of nameless adventurers, without a stake in the country. — *N. Y. Correspondent of London Times, Aug. 11, 1863.*

To meet the subject fairly we must begin, I think, by acknowledging a general decay of what may be termed the civic virtues, — a decay which has been going on for many years, affecting all parties and all classes.

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Even an unexampled and uninterrupted prosperity has indirectly contributed to it. Until the recent outbreak no amount of maladministration has been found perceptibly to impair this prosperity; from which sensible and well disposed men have hastily concluded that civil government, well or ill administered, at least in a country like ours where the people are self-governed, is not of much consequence after all. In this way government generally, except, perhaps, that part of it which is represented by the local police, has lost in their eyes, little by little, the support derived from a sense of its sacredness and necessity. They have been led not only to take less and less interest in it, but also to feel less and less anxiety about it, — content to build up each one his own private fortune, and leaving it for those who have nothing better to do to look after the State.—*Election Sermon of James Walker, D. D., Jan. 7, 1863.*

We believe ourselves to be right when we say that the causes of this terrible civil war show nothing more aggravating and lamentable than the fact that so many of our ablest class of citizens have left their interests in politics, and given their attention exclusively to business and the pleasures of social life. They have left the adventurers to govern the caucuses, to control the conventions, to name the candidates for public office, and to direct the affairs of the nation.—*N. Y. Journal of Commerce, June 13, 1864.*

Nothing but the most scandalous disregard of public decency could induce nominating committees to present three-fourths of the names which the community is asked to vote for. Many of them are notorious for their malfeasances in office, their ignorance and their boorishness. They have not one single thing to recommend them; and, to their credit be it said, they do not claim to have.—*N. Y. Journal of Commerce, Nov. 16, 1863.*

The nation has been ruined by politicians. Politicians work by the machinery to which we now refer. It is a puzzle to some men to understand how the few

If our political action came from the people, the result, no doubt, would generally be the election of ability and worth. They would seek, in the main, the requisite qualities for a fit performance of official duty. The ready dictates of a common sense, and a personal interest, as well as the requirements of the republican form, would call for and secure no less. Then

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can govern the many in these primary meetings, but the explanation is simple to the initiated. The organization of every party includes leaders and followers, and the bond between them is a bond of support for reward. Success ensures the distribution of offices and plunder, and the pay for service is graduated with reference to past dues and future ability to render valuable aid.

Thousands of respectable and intelligent citizens in New York, men of wealth and character, are too indolent or too careless to attempt any reform of this state of things.—*N. Y. Journal of Commerce*, May 30, 1864.

The theory of our government is that the people select their wisest and best men for the important and honorable service of national legislation. If this were fact as well as theory, our members of Congress would be men to whom the pecuniary rewards of the service would be of small account, because they could do better in their professions or business at home. After their congressional terms had expired, such men would not be found hanging about Congress and the executive departments, begging for places. They would be above it and have no temptations to it. The crowd of ex-Congressmen now in inferior positions, and the still larger crowd supplicating and intriguing for places, furnish conclusive demonstration that our ablest and best men are not sent to Congress; that, by some means, inferior men, men of small calibre and less character, are entrusted with the responsibilities of national legislators. Of course the fault is primarily with the people, who have no right to send as their representatives insignificant and mean men when there is really no lack among us of men of high culture and honorable position. It is no excuse to say that the plotting wire-pulling politicians are at the bottom of it; the voters should not surrender their personal judgment and their votes to the control of the small, bargaining politicians.—*Springfield Republican*, Nov. 21, 1863.

On entering the House of Representatives at Washington, one is struck by the vulgar demeanor of that great assembly. Often there is not a distinguished man in the whole number.—“*Democracy in America*,” by *De Tocqueville*.

Senator Wall, of New Jersey, tells how it happened that the indemnity bill got through the Senate without opposition. “Four of our men”—and he named them,—“four of our men were so drunk they couldn’t leave their rooms; and the others, not knowing how drunk these men were, had gone off to Count Mercier’s party.”—*Springfield Republican*, March 6, 1863.

We have learned too habitually in times of peace to have it thrust upon us now, that we are “thirty millions of people, led by thirty thousand petty caucus politicians.”—*Boston Transcript*.

To be sure, the forms of free suffrage are left us, and this suffrage has been more and more extended; but to what purpose, if the whole is merely to sanction a foregone conclusion agreed upon elsewhere. A printed list of names is thrust upon me, which I transfer to the ballot-box, with the not very pleasing or flattering consciousness that I am *used* by somebody, I know not whom, for some purpose, I know not what.—*Election Sermon of James Walker, D.D.*, Jan. 7, 1863.

Policy is a snare, and politicians, in the sense which that word has acquired in America, are a curse to us.—“*God in the War*,” a *Discourse*, by *Henry Smith, D. D.*

we should have, generally, at least, integrity, ability and worth in office. These, generally, we already have, wherever the people, in our republican forms, are brought into personal and familiar action in the selections for positions of trust.

This is, indeed, an important truth in aid of the republican theory. It may be well established, as a general truth, by a fair survey of our country towns, in the conduct of their local affairs. Men dishonest, incompetent men, cannot be elected and held in position in our minor rural communities. In the country towns, within their sphere, the people at large are duly familiar with men and measures in public relations. They demand in the main, they secure in the main, the accomplishment of the public good. But here their efforts end. They perform enough to vindicate their ability, to evince a fit intelligence and morality, within the precincts of the minor towns. They perform no more. *Not one in a score, scarce one in a hundred of these same men pays any attention whatever to the County, or District, or State conventions through which the mere political seekers achieve ambitions and secure the Government.* The people fail in vigilance.

But how many men, and who, are alarmed? To what extent of public depravity, to what degree of national imbecility, will we permit ourselves to attain, before we arouse to political reform? We indulged Slavery for fifty years, in regular attainments of strength and position. And we now receive our reward. "Ye shall bear the sins of your idols." \* How

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\* The *Montreal Witness* thus moralizes on our Rebellion and Civil War:

"The present desolating contest in the United States is the result of a long train of antecedents. The man who, by a career of industry and frugality, adds to his possessions year by year, does not more certainly accumulate a fortune, than a nation, by a career of injustice and pride, treasures up wrath against the day of wrath. The mischief was done *then*; it has only become apparent *now*. When the United States consented to sanction Slavery, however indirectly, in their Federal Constitution, the evil seed was sown which has grown into a great tree and overshadowed the land. When they, for considerations of expediency, allowed the Slave Power to obtain the ascendancy, and to spread Slavery into Louisiana, Missouri, and Texas, they were striking deadly blows at their own future peace. When they put the army and navy of the United States at the service of Slavery, as in the case of the Amistad negroes, Greytown and Kansas, and when they haughtily proclaimed to the nations that their flag must not even be visited to ascertain whether it was covering the prohibited slave trade or not, great trouble was evidently drawing nigh. The Scripture says: — 'A haughty

long will we venture to forego Integrity in the relations of party and government? How long will we rest in shameful negligence in the pitiful narrowness of self? How long will we pursue our private affairs,—our farms, our shops, our trade,—and permit, outside of the minor towns, the sole and unlimited sway of demagogues? May men of integrity, of delicate honor, of eminent ability and worth, no longer hope for political preferment through the just judgments of the people? Must the country continue to forego their aid in deference to mere political seekers, through the popular neglect of manifest duty, in clear derogation of the public good, and to the imminent peril of our republican form? Shall we continue to attach to our highest honors, and to the vital interests of the common weal, the political adventurers and mere debauchees, or even men like the free and mellifluous Hale? We do not disown his genial soul. We fear his virtue. Is he open, alas! in his easy hours, may he yield to the fatal allurements of vice? Can he reject money, forego fees, maintain an untouched republican honor? Such are the concerns that the times suggest. These, and similar forms of enquiry, would appear both common and necessary were there a present vigi-

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spirit goeth before a fall;’ and the fall could not be far off when such unheard-of pride was manifested. It is said, and said truly, that these measures were the result of slave-holding ascendancy at Washington—that they were planned and carried out by the very parties who were now in rebellion; but the North, which had always the majority of votes, could have prevented them. The North acquiesced for the sake of union, peace, and profit; and, therefore, the whole nation is responsible for them, and fearful has the weight of that responsibility proved.

“Never, we suppose, in the history of the world, were injustice, oppression, and inhumanity more haughtily proclaimed, and more unblushingly defended, than in the United States; and a righteous Providence stood pledged, as it were, to make the punishment as signal as the offense.” — *New York Tribune*, Oct. 23, 1862.

Cotemporaneous with our indulgence to slavery, has been our neglect of *political integrity*. Indeed, the former is involved in the latter. We have no right to expect, even with the suppression of the rebellion, a relief from the pressure of evil. *Political corruption will suffice for our ruin*. Were we “treasuring wrath” in indulging slavery? We are no less surely treasuring wrath in permitting the politics of the times.



lance on the part of the people, under a suitable sense of personal duty in the affairs of politics and government.

"It has been remarked by an eminent Frenchman that 'Government will be as rascally as the people permit.'"<sup>\*</sup> This sentiment implies the popular rule; and indeed with us, the popular morals continue to hold a degree of control. Men grossly and notoriously vicious and criminal can hardly secure the popular vote, except in especially negligent constituencies. Such men, it is true, may rule in New York, which has probably the basest rule in Christendom.<sup>†</sup> And possibly there are other governments still, within our boasted republican precincts, where the public virtue is similarly impotent. But in most of our constituencies, notorious implications in positive vice so militate against the means of success, that politicians forego the more prominent knaves, and substitute those who, if not more virtuous, are less notoriously vile. Still, the direction of affairs in the hands of politicians is constantly towards an increased baseness. The people no sooner forego their duty than the vicious agencies assume the sway, and go forward as far in the prosecution of vice as the popular negligence allows. This negligence allowed the election of Mr. Hale to his second term in the Senate. It has permitted the election of other senators

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<sup>\*</sup> New York *Independent*.

<sup>†</sup> Judge Barnard of New York, to the Grand Jury :

"A few years since, a body of unprincipled and corrupt men banded together for the purpose of controlling the legislative branch of the City Government by their votes, forming what is now known as the 'Ring.' It is still in active operation. There is no scheme, no matter how corrupt or wicked, but what will pass through, provided a sufficient pecuniary inducement is brought to bear; and no measure, however meritorious, is sufficient to become a law unless a like influence is used. They seek to control every branch of the City Government. There are men also who band together and live by the presentation and collection of fraudulent claims against this city, originated in fraud and carried through by perjury. The remedy lies with the people themselves. As long as they abstain from voting, or vote for unworthy men, just so long will the taxes of this city go on rapidly increasing until in a few years it will amount to a confiscation of property. If the community are desirous of preserving their property, they should begin at once and organize themselves into associations for the purpose of effecting municipal reform."—*New York Tribune*, April 8, 1864.

It is little to know, as the public have long known, that the whole system of municipal government in New York is a system of organised robbery.—*New York Tribune*, April 7, 1864.

still, who are still more obnoxious to a just republicanism. We may revert, and properly, to illustrative incidents. Our public men are fairly subject to a just public criticism.\* It is fit, moreover, to review our policy, and to illustrate our political practice.

Prior to his second election to the Senate, there were ways and means in the course of Mr. Hale, which, in an aspirant for public position, a vigilant people might well have observed. They were not unrelated to the public interests. He was reputed a *lobbyist* in the congressional purlieus; and in the Brooks and Burlingame *faux pas* of a duel, he appeared the defender of a dubious faith, a disjunctive philosophy, ingenious and novel, and manifestly potent in shielding iniquity if only received and accepted. It was devised, no doubt, to appease Mr. Brooks and avert the bloody arbitrament. Significant chivalry! A man, it was said, could be detached from his conduct. A man could be separated from his acts. He might thus, it is obvious, be counted a gentleman though his conduct should prove him a pitiful knave. This sapient system, thus sagely resultant, Mr. Hale maintained in the cause of his friend. He put forth an essay to support it.

Had the legislators of New Hampshire been the just representatives of an honest and high-minded constituency, they would not have elected a man who had pursued exceptionable measures of practice. The intelligent and high-toned patriotism of the State would have demanded, in a candidate for the national Senate, a high-toned integrity—an untouched honor.

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\* I know not how we are to preserve political virtue in a republic, unless we expose political vice, and do it freely. And it is right, no doubt, in making the exposure, to name the offenders freely. *Buckle* says, having reference to three officials whom he held to be delinquents, a clergyman, a magistrate, and a judge, — "To discourage a repetition of the offence, the offenders must be punished. And, surely, no punishment can be more severe than to preserve their names." So *Junius* declares, of one who "preserves no measures with the public," — "I would pursue him through life, and try the last exertion of my abilities to preserve the perishable infamy of his name, and make it immortal."



The cause of the republic demands no less. The national welfare and fame demand it. But the New Hampshire legislators were like other legislators. They were mainly, no doubt, self-constituted rulers; the supple managers of primary caucuses and general conventions, especially seeking their own ambitions. We may presume they selected themselves. The people of the State, like the Massachusetts people, and the people of other States of the Union, as a whole, no doubt, surrender politics to mere politicians, and rest content in ratifying their acts at the legally appointed elections. Hence they, like others elect politicians. Hence Mr. Hale was elected; while their superior men, able and honest, scorning to manipulate the political wires in elevation of themselves to position, remain disconnected from public affairs, aloof, unsought, unknown. The republican theory looks to the people. The politicians look to themselves. Is the republic to prosper? It must be through the people, in the selection by them of the ablest and best. No honorable man can descend to the politics that are needful, now, to success. Hence honorable men are not in office, except occasionally, and then by accident.\* Alas, the popular negligence!

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\* We never had greater men in science, in learning, in art; we never had greater lawyers, or greater merchants, or greater engineers. Evidently, therefore, the problem to be solved is not, why men of large capacity have failed us, but why such men are so apt to turn aside from politics, and devote themselves to other pursuits. It is because the new doctrines and new policies have had the effect to make an enlightened and experienced statesmanship a disqualification for the highest offices in the national government. Not the fittest, but the most available candidate is sought for, one who will revive no grudges, awaken no jealousies, a new man, and, above all, a man who is not a power in himself. Thus all the candidates educated for the place are passed over; and what is worse a policy is inaugurated which makes it certain that soon no such candidates will be left. Hence the answer to the oft repeated question, by which it is thought to silence complaints against official incompetency. Where can you find better men? Where, indeed! You can find good men and great men; but why wonder that you cannot find great statesmen, men educated and trained for public life—men who have already won the public confidence, and whose names are in everybody's mouth—why wonder that this is impossible, when you have been pursuing for years a course which has made it impossible.—*James Walker, D. D.*

Whilst the natural instincts of democracy induce the people to reject distinguished citizens as their rulers, an instinct not less strong induces able men to retire from the political arena, in which it is so difficult to retain their independence or to advance without becoming servile.—“*Democracy in America*,” by *De Tocqueville*.

But the people of New Hampshire, in this prevalent negligence, by no means present an especial remissness. The evil is general throughout the republic. The little state of Rhode Island stands badly distinguished. She gave us a Simmons. No doubt she knew him; and knowing him well she ought to have kept him away from the Senate. But it is more than likely that the interests of self, with a leading few, if not with the mass, discovered in him the facile means of its own especial achievements. He was, no doubt, the manufacturers' man; moreover, a manipulator, keen and accomplished, in the sinuous and selfish means of the "tariffs," which were held as essential to Rhode Island "interests." But the man who can be used as the tool of a class, in clear abnegation of the common good, may be capable, also, of serving himself in outrage of common honesty and honor. The result so proved. A sworn legislator, in the highest relation, this senator's service was due to the country. He gave that service in her hour of peril — he gave that service to himself. He sold his aid against the treasury. He accepted money. \*

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With us our organization of party is a conspiracy for the success of mediocrity. Strong men, men of decided ability or strength of character, are not *available*, which means that the wire-pullers cannot mould, turn, twist, or hoodwink them at pleasure. — *New York Commercial Advertiser*, June 9, 1864.

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\* We ought to learn from our enemies. De Tocqueville says: —

"Men will not receive truth from their enemies, and it is very seldom offered to them by their friends."

"The majority lives in the perpetual utterance of self applause; and there are certain truths which the Americans can only learn from strangers or from experience." — *Boston Weekly Courier*, March 17, 1864.

The whole history of our former association with the Northern States admonishes us that in a common government they will never fail to employ their power to take away our property. Their present malice springs chiefly from baffled cupidity. But for this master passion of their nature, an honorable and speedy peace would be easy. — *The Assembly of Virginia to the Virginia Soldiers*.

The *Richmond Enquirer* thus responds to the peace propositions of Cox, the democratic congressman from Ohio: "The seductive song of the impassioned swain means, Help us, Carolina, to a democratic ticket for next Congress, and you shall have part of the stealings. Have we not always, oh child of the sun! lived and loved and stolen together? How often have our hands met in the pocket of the same innocent public, and fondly pressed one another! Without

It was a case of dishonor that concerned Rhode Island. Has she ever revealed her sense of his conduct, and of her own negligence, in a manner indicative of thorough reform? No, never. The ways of dishonor are but the common ways in the relations of politics and government. They fail to alarm us. The self-constituted influences that control our elections still continue in being. They are permitted still. They organize action and accomplish their ends, with scarcely a reference to the popular sense, which, in the passing times, from the popular negligence, is indeed of small significance.

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our dear South the democrats can plunder no more! Without thee that once unterrified party pines in isolation and despair; it is one blade of a pair of scissors; it is the half of a hook and eye. So sings the swain of Ohio. Will Carolina hearken to the gay seducer?" — *Springfield Republican*, March 17, 1863.

In reading the accounts of what is said and done at the South, I am not offended. I can hardly say I am disappointed at the courage and constancy manifested amidst great sacrifices and privations, for what they have been made to believe is right. These are qualities which I can admire even in a foe. But I am filled with mingled sorrow, disgust, and dismay, when I see the false views and intense hate entertained there against the Free States, not merely by the principal actors in the rebellion, but by clergymen and women, — many of them our own brothers and sisters, and children, our own flesh and blood. Nevertheless we must be just. I do not ascribe this unnatural and unrighteous alienation of the Southern mind to a spontaneous movement among the people, nor to the legitimate working of our institutions. It is the accursed fruit of the irresponsible, underground machinations of the leaders of party. — *James Walker, D. D.*

It would be well if we knew how much of the southern hatred towards us, indeed, how much of the war, comes from a view of the venal baseness, and general meanness, which, through the popular negligence, have misrepresented the North at Washington; and especially from the strenuous persistence of many in selfish and oppressive tariffs. Have we sent men who, in the interests of class, pushed the South to the extreme of endurance? Have the people surrendered the broad prerogatives of a national patriotism to the narrowness of class and self — through the agency of men of the stamp of Simmons? Is it strange, then, that the South hates us?

The exposure of senator Simmons, of which we give the evidence in another column, is exciting a great deal of indignation at Washington, and will have the same effect all over the country. People have not forgotten that he has been engaged in other trading speculations. His notorious schooner load of yankee notions, stopped on their way to Port Royal, has been newly brought before the country of late, by a demand of Mr. Simmons for payment, on the plea of damages done by the Secretary of the Treasury in arresting that commercial venture. But he is better known at Washington by the manner in which he has persistently urged trade legislation to benefit himself. He is largely interested in manufactures of a peculiar kind, and it is notorious that he has been the unceasing advocate, in his place in Congress, of duties whose direct effect was to enrich him and the manufacturing company with which he is connected, at the expense of the country. — *New York Evening Post*.

Nor is negligence the lowest vice of our practice. A popular venality is sometimes manifest. There are men in high positions of government whose distinctive means of success is money; and Rhode Island is the State, of the New England States, of which allegations of baseness are made in the debauchments of money at the polls. Mr. Sprague had wealth. The political managers found, it is said, that with him and his money freely applied, they could oust an existing State *regime*. Mr. Sprague was willing. His money abounded. He was elected Governor; and thence, without any strength distinctive, in the relations of talent and worth, he was elected to the United States Senate. Alas, Rhode Island! Her people, careless, if not debauched, are untrue to the cause of the country.\*

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\* The Brooklyn *Eagle* thus daguerreotypes Senator Sprague :

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"Some three or four years since the young men of Rhode Island deemed it well to break up the 'machine' which had so long controlled the State, and which had put in nomination Seth Paddleford for Governor. They selected young Sprague, whose family friends were possessed, as well as he, of vast wealth, which they would gladly spend to gain position. At it they went, hip and thigh, Sprague and Paddleford, money against money. It was estimated that the Paddelfordians were mulcted in the modest sum of \$75,000. Corruption of the most unblushing nature was openly practised at the polls, and the whole State flashed with the brilliancy of the golden drops. Sprague was elected, and by the aid and comfort of an able Secretary of State (Bartlett), and a distinguished prelate of the church, acquitted himself with credit. His long-closed purse was opened, and with great generosity his messengers promised to the Prince of Wales that if he would visit Rhode Island he should be entertained like a prince, and in a peculiarly reckless manner.

"Of his military career, the less said the better, unless, indeed, General Burnside should be quoted, but of that, never mind.

"Sprague did well in raising and equipping troops. These were sent from his State within twenty-four hours after the call was made, and he deserves credit for it.

"He was chosen Senator with but little trouble, although he was not of the required age. Indeed, we doubt if he is yet old enough for the position. He will take his seat at the approaching session. He will make no speeches, for he neither writes nor talks; he will not contribute to the dignity of the Senate, for he is small, thin, and unprepossessing in appearance; he will vote regularly, \* \* \* and he will always regret that he forsook his congenial factory, where he made a mark and could hold his own with the best of them, for the marble halls of the legislators whom he can neither influence nor comprehend." — *Albany Atlas and Argus*, Nov. 17, 1863.

The democrats made a show of nominating a ticket, but not much in voting for it, and the only interest in the election was in the Legislature, which is to elect a U. S. Senator in place of Mr. Anthony. Governor Smith wants the place, and so does Mr. Anthony, and the split has become quite serious; nor is it yet quite certain how it will come out. Rhode Island is a small State, but the politics seem to be no purer there than in larger States, and in fact the rich

It is not my purpose to go out of New England, in pursuit of illustrative incidents. It were enough to attend to ourselves; though, possibly, incidents more palpably flagrant, at least in their ordinary features, might be readily adduced from abroad. Indeed, a Cameron's name might be brought forward, and presented in connection with a line of achievements unsurpassed in the history of self. It is scarcely needful. He is familiarly known. We recently saw him in the acme of assurance, when we were told he aspired to the Vice President's place, through the next Presidential election. Persuasive statesman! Badly off as we are in the relations of vice, we may yet look in pity on poor Pennsylvania, in view of her subjection, through political wiles, to the bestowal of Simon Cameron; for he was the bearer to President Lincoln of her legislative proceedings, engrossed on parchment, in behalf of his second election. Poor sons of Penn! What stronger evidence were it possible to afford, if not of ignorance and immorality, at least of the grossest political negligence, than the continued sway of Cameron? \*

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politicians have more chance of buying a good place. Senator Sprague had no difficulty in stepping into his present place from the Governorship, and now Smith wants to play the same game, and if he buys up a few more newspapers may succeed. — *Springfield Republican*, April 9, 1864.

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\* *Resolved*, That Simon Cameron, late Secretary of War, by investing Alexander Cummings with the control of large sums of the public money, and authority to purchase military supplies, without restriction, without requiring from him any guarantee for the faithful performance of his duties, when the services of competent public officers were available, and by involving the Government in a vast number of contracts with persons not legitimately engaged in the business pertaining to the subject matter of such contracts, especially in the purchase of arms for future delivery, has adopted a policy highly injurious to the public service, and deserves the censure of the House. *Resolution passed by a Republican House of Representatives.*

Mr. Cameron was rewarded by the mission to Russia. — *Albany Atlas and Argus*, Oct. 30, 1862.

T. J. Boyer, a member of the Pennsylvania legislature, publishes a circumstantial statement of the attempt of Simon Cameron to buy his vote for the United States senatorship. Boyer feigned to enter into the arrangement and was promised \$20,000 for his vote, the money being placed in the hands of a third person, a Mr. Patterson. The original idea of Cameron was to hire three democratic members to stay away from their seats, and so give him an accidental majority, but Boyer, whose real object was to defeat Cameron, objected to any dicker with any other member, as his vote for Cameron would accomplish the object. Boyer says that as soon as Mr. Cameron supposed the business was settled,

We may turn from abroad; we may recur to ourselves.

Massachusetts sends Henry Wilson to the Senate. Ostensibly she sends him. But really he secures the position himself. Massachusetts essentially abides in negligence. She is amused, it is true. She accepts asseverations, steady and strong, in opposition to American slavery. She permits herself to be plied with these; and she permits, therewith, the application of tactics to the general control of her political affairs in whatever relates to place and spoils. She permits the rule of mere politicians, of whom Mr. Wilson is the veriest chief. Foregoing honor, foregoing patriotism — *foregoing both as she foregoes vigilance* — she permits the achievements of *self*.

The author of this essay, some years ago, in the legitimate pursuit of political affairs, was brought in contact with Henry Wilson; and for several years, in matters of politics, was necessarily familiar, not inconsiderably, with his general tactics and practical measures. He saw his modes of success; and, seeing his modes, he was led to observe, with a degree of distrust, his bearing in official position. Regarding the public acts of officials as suitable subjects of popular comment, he reduced his observations, for a limited space, at an eventful period in American affairs, to the form of a public letter. He offered that letter to the press. It was withheld for the time. As a part of this essay, in a future number, he intends to present it to the public. It may serve in illustrating the American statesman of the modern type, in the full fruition of modern modes. It may serve in presenting Our Political Practice; and, hence, our need of reform.

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he threw himself upon the bed and exclaimed, "I shall be senator. I will then be the most powerful man in America. These southern people will gain their independence. We will have a northern republic, and with the aid of the New England states govern matters pretty much as we like." Mr. Boyer seems to tell a straightforward story, and there is nothing in Mr. Cameron's case that renders it improbable. — *Springfield Republican*, Jan. 26, 1863.



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